

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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P R 190351Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1529

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5424

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - PARAGRAPH FOUR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE  
KIM TAE-CHUNG

BEGIN SUMMARY: DURING MEETING JULY 14 WITH DCM AND POLCOUNS, KIM TAE-CHUNG EXPRESSED DEEP PESSIMISM ABOUT ROK FUTURE, SAYING THAT THREE MORE YEARS OF PAK RULE WOULD LEAVE ROK POPULATION WITH FEELING THAT ROKG NO DIFFERENT FROM NORTH KOREAN REGIME. KIM CLAIMED US WAS GIVING PRIORITY ATTENTION TO SECURITY ISSUES AT THE EXPENSE OF CONCERN FOR DEMOCRACY. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT WANT USG INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL ROK AFFAIRS, HE URGED THE US TO SPEAK OUT IN FAVOR OF DEMOCRACY IN KOREA. KIM VIEWED OPPOSITION FORCES AS WEAK AND UNABLE TO CHALLENGE ROKG. END SUMMARY.

1. AT A LUNCH MEETING AT DCM'S RESIDENCE JULY 14, FORMER NDP PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE KIM TAE-CHUNG ASSERTED THE KOREAN PEOPLE WERE PASSIONATE IN THE DESIRE FOR DEMOCRACY. HOWEVER, IF PAK REGIME CONTINUED ALONG CURRENT LINES FOR THREE MORE YEARS, MOST KOREANS WOULD SEE NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ROK AND NORTH KOREA, AND MANY WOULD FEEL FOR ECONOMIC REASONS THAT THEY WOULD BE BETTER OFF UNDER COMMUNISM. KIM NOTED THAT MANY ROK CITIZENS WERE ALREADY LISTENING TO RADIO PYONGYANG TO  
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FIND OUT ABOUT SUCH NEWS AS THE GULF OIL SCANDAL AND THE

MAY SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY STUDENT DEMONSTRATION WHICH WAS NOT BEING REPORTED BY ROK MEDIA.

2. KIM CHASTISED THE USG FOR PUTTING SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS AHEAD OF CONCERN FOR DEMOCRACY. THIS HAD BEEN THE CASE WITH OUR SUPPORT FOR CHANG KAI-SHEK, LON NOL, THIEU AND WAS NOW THE CASE WITH THE PAK REGIME. IT WAS POINTED OUT TO KIM THAT USG DID NOT CHOOSE SECURITY OVER DEMOCRACY; SECURITY WAS SEEN AS A MEANS OF PERMITTING DEMOCRACY TO GROW. MOREOVER, OUR SECURITY COMMITMENT TO KOREA DID NOT IMPLY SUPPORT FOR ANY PARTICULAR GOVERNMENT.

3. WHILE INSISTING THAT HE DID NOT WANT THE USG TO INTERFERE IN INTERNAL ROK AFFAIRS, KIM NEVERTHELESS FELT THE USG SHOULDNUSE ITS INFLUENCE WITH THE PAK GOVERNMENT TO SECURE A RELAXATION OF REPRESSION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE US COULD NOT USE THE THREAT OF A REDUCTION IN OUR SUPPORT FOR KOREAN SECURITY AS LEVERAGE ON PAK. HE URGED, HOWEVER, THAT THE USG SPEAK OUT PUBLICLY IN FAVOR OF KOREAN DEMOCRACY BOTH TO INFLUENCE PAK AND TO ENCOURAGE THE KOREAN PEOPLE.

4. KIM DESCRIBED THE OPPOSITION FORCES AS BEING VERY WEAK. THE NDP WAS UNDER CRITICISM FOR HAVING COOPERATED WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN THE RECENT ASSEMBLY SESSION. THE STUDENTS COULD NOT CONTEND WITH THE EXTENSIVE CONTROLS OF THE ROKG, AND THE RELIGIOUS AND INTELLECTUAL GROUPS WERE EQUALLY UNJBLE TO CHALLENGE THE GOVERNMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE WAS A GENERAL RELUCTANCE TO CAUSE TROUBLE AS A RESULT OF THE GENUINELY FELT FEARS OF A SECURITY THREAT FROM THE NORTH. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY TRUE SINCE PYONGYANG TENDED TO PORTRAY OPPOSITION ACTIVITY AS SOMEHOW PRO-NORTH KOREAN, THUS MAKING IT EASY FOR THE PAK REGIME TO SIMILARLY CHARACTERIZE SUCH OPPOSITION AND MAKING OPPOSITION FIGURES THEMSELVES HESITANT TO PLAY INTO NORTH KOREAN HANDS.

5. KIM URGED THE EMBASSY TO CINTINUE ITS CONTACTS WITH OPPOSITION FIGURES EVEN IF NO CONCRETE STEPS COULD BE TAKEN TO CHANGE PAK'S POLICIES. HE FELT THE CONTACTS CONFIDENTIAL

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ALONE WOULD MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT THE US CONTINUED TO BE INTERESTED IN DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. REGARDING HIS OWN PERSONAL POSITION, KIM SAID HE WOULD APPEAL HIS ELECTION VIOLATION CASE TO THE SUPREME COURT IF NECESSARY. ONCE THIS CASE WAS OVER, HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO TRAVEL TO THE US IN RESPONSE TO AN

INVITATION FROM PROF. REISCHAUER. HE CLAIMED THAT HE  
WAS FREE TO MOVE ABOUT SEOUL, ALTHOUGH HE WAS CONSTANTLY  
FOLLOWED.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL SITUATION  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 16 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <16 JUL 2003 by CunninFX>; RELEASED <16 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <17 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONVERSATION WITH FORMER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE KIM TAE-CHUNG  
**TAGS:** PINT, KS, (KIM TAE-CHUNG)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006